

WASHINGTON BUREAU
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
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January 28, 2003

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW. CY-B402
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 02-384
Application by the Verizon Corporation for Authorization Under Section 271 of the Communications Act to Provide In-Region, Interlata Services in the District of Columbia, Maryland and West Virginia

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I am writing this letter in support of Verizon's application to expand long-distance service options to consumers in the District of Columbia, Maryland and West Virginia. The NAACP's principal objective is to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality for racial and ethnic minority groups of United States and to eliminate race prejudice. As such, it is clear that all consumers regardless of where they work, study or reside should have access to affordable and robust telecommunications services.

Telephone consumers generally benefit when local telephone companies are permitted to compete in the long distance market. Verizon's entry into the long distance market will spur competition, which is likely to result in a significant decrease in the long-distance prices paid by many customers. Certainly, consumers in the District of Columbia, Maryland and West Virginia ought to have the same opportunity for substantial savings and competitive service as consumers in New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and other states throughout the region.

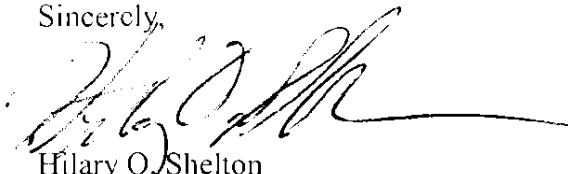
Additionally, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) should approve this application which will likely spur economic development and competition, and in turn, benefit racial and ethnic minority communities. Upgrading the network infrastructure and expanding the number of services offered to compete in long distance has the potential to create new jobs and business opportunities for racial and ethnic minority workers and businesses. Verizon has a history of purchasing long distance advertising from African American as well as other racial and ethnic minority-media and will most likely continue this business practice.

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Verizon has proven that it is a friend to racial and ethnic minority communities, most notably in its hiring and contracting practices. Approving its long distance application to foster competition will extend affordable telephone service options to low and moderate income consumers in the District of Columbia, Maryland and West Virginia.

If there is anything else I can do to help advance this process in support of Verizon's long distance application, I can be reached by telephone at (202) 638-2269.

Sincerely,



Hilary O. Shelton
Director